With this being my last article of 2022, it seems an opportune time to look back on what has been a truly eventful year. The news this year has been dominated by Russia’s unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, bring large-scale aggressive war of conquest back to the Europe in a way a lot of us believed had been consigned to the history books. September really did feel like the end of an important era in British history with the passing of Her Majesty The Queen. The lifetime of service she gave to this country, and the extraordinary changes which occurred during her reign will never be forgotten. This meant of course we also witnessed the accession of His Majesty The King and in 2023 we can look forward to the coronation celebrations which will occur in May.

Locally, I’ve continued to work closely with Rearsby Parish Council and others on matters such as clearing Rearsby Brook, planning applications, speeding in the village (I’ve funded a new mobile speed activated sign which should hopefully be with us in the new year) as well as a host of other matters residents raise with me. If you need my help with anything please get in touch (my contact details are below).

Charnwood recognised for business support during covid-19

Charnwood Borough Council has been recognised as the ‘best in the region’ for its support of small businesses during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Council was named as the overall winner in the East Midlands Covid-19 Support and Recovery category at the Federation of Small Business (FSB) Local Government awards. The awards celebrate and recognise local authorities which made the biggest impact on small businesses during the pandemic.

The judges were impressed by the Council’s response to the pandemic including its quick distribution of government funding to businesses and launching a wide range of innovative campaigns to support the reopening and recovery of the local economy. They also recognised the Council provided support to the high street by offering 150 businesses free advertising through its Charnwood inBusiness campaign and creating a dedicated online shopping platform as part of the Shop Safe, Shop Local campaign.

Since the start of the pandemic, the Council has issued over £65million in Government funding to over 4,850 local firms. Officers carried out visits at over 1,500 businesses to offer advice and help ensure they were complying with the latest regulations. The Council also issued hundreds of email updates to keep firms up to date with guidance.

New strategy and action plan sets out path to net zero

An ambitious blueprint setting out how residents, businesses and other groups can work together to help make Leicestershire a net zero carbon county by 2045 has taken a big step forward. Following a consultation, Leicestershire County Council has updated its plan after almost 1,400 people had their say on the draft this summer.

The council is already more than 70 per cent of the way towards the goal of becoming a net zero council by 2030 and wants to team up with others to make the county-wide target a reality.

Priority next steps for action include:

* Delivering the Sustainable Warmth Programme to improve energy performance of homes, reducing emissions and fuel poverty
* Working with partners to develop a new programme of business support for carbon reduction
* Generating local renewable energy through the development of Quorn Solar Farm and successful rollout of Solar Together Leicestershire, to provide more than 1,000 households with solar panels
* Working with partners to reduce the carbon impact of food production, distribution and waste through the Sustainable Food Plan.
* Bringing organisation, businesses and residents together to tackle climate change through the Leicestershire Climate and Nature Pact
* Supporting communities to take action through the SHIRE Environment Grants programme

The council has also developed the 2030 Net Zero Council Action Plan to help strengthen the authority as a leader in tackling climate change. The Net Zero Leicestershire Strategy and Action Plan, as well as a summary of the consultation, can be viewed online.

Can I take this opportunity to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

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